

L/275—

# HUGO'S GERMAN COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

A COLLECTION OF PRACTICAL UP-TO-DATE LETTERS  
AND COMMERCIAL PHRASES, WITH FULL TRANSLA  
TION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES; TO WHICH IS ADDED  
A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND FOREIGN WORDS  
USED IN GERMAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.

*ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.*

LONDON.

HUGO'S LANGUAGE INSTITUTE,  
83 GRACECHURCH STREET, E.C.; and Branches.

706

438

1091

## PREFACE.

---

In the first section of this work, students are made acquainted with all the important idiomatic and commercial expressions, in short simple phrases. The use of such sentences necessarily involves frequent repetition of the same words (I, we, etc.) at the beginning of the clause ; but this repetition is not so likely to occur when a more flowing style can be adopted. In our endeavour to remove all unnecessary difficulties, we have sometimes sacrificed elegance to clearness.

**Orthography.**—Until a few years ago, much uncertainty prevailed as to the correct way of spelling many words now naturalized in German, but originally imported from foreign languages. This, and other questions affecting German spelling have been settled by a duly authorized commission, and definite orthographical rules have now been fixed. In spite of this, there are still some points on which custom differs in the various kingdoms and duchies of which the German Empire consists.

Although these new rules are enforced at schools and government offices, it will still be a long time before the commercial world conforms with the new style of spelling.

In this book, the new orthographical rules have not been adhered to strictly, in those cases where a different spelling is still prevalent in commercial circles. It is advisable that students should be acquainted with the various ways ; but we add, for the guidance, the principal rules. These chiefly affect nouns of foreign origin, which have now become incorporated in German.

1. Words formerly spelt with *th* are now written with *t* only. Thus : *thun*—*thun*, *Thüre*—*Türe*, *nöthig* (necessary) —*nötig*.

2. The *c* in foreign words has been replaced either by *k* or *z*, according to sound. Thus : *Centner* (hundredweight) becomes *Zentner* ; *December*—*Dezember* ; *Procent* (per cent)—*Prozent*. On the other hand : *Factura* (invoice)—*Faktura* ; *Cassa* (cash)—*Kassa* ; *Conto* (account)—*Konto* ; *October*—*Oktober* ; *Continent*—*Kontinent* ; *Consument* (consumer)—*Konsument*.

3. Some words in the German language have been from foreign sources, and Germanized by the adoption of the Latin spelling. The most important commercial expressions come under this head are : *Scheck* (cheque) and *Streck* (stretch).

4. Compound words are generally written in one word provided they are not too long. Thus : *Lager-Raum* (stock-warehouse) = *Lagerraum* ; *Geschäfts-Freunde* (business friends) = *Geschäftsfreunde* ; *General-Agent* = *Generalagent* ; *Dampfer* (line of steamers) = *Dampferlinie* ; *Ernte-Aussichten* (harvest prospects) = *Ernteaussichten*. Longer words are still divided by hyphens being placed between the component parts, as *Dampfschiff(f)ahrt-Gesellschaft* (steamship company), *Feuerversicherungs-Gesellschaft* (fire insurance company).

**Use of Foreign Nouns.**—Every effort has been made to abolish the use of foreign nouns in all cases where German substitute is available. Commercial language is largely dependent on such foreign words ; and up to the present very few have been replaced in practice by German expressions. At the end of this book we give a list of modern words which may be used in place of the older forms.

**Commercial Style.**—Commercial language is far from always perfect from a literary point of view ; and we may draw the student's attention to one construction peculiar to commercial phraseology. Though *und* does not, as a rule, affect the order of words in German sentences (see Hugo's German Syntax, par. 108), the reversal of subject and verb frequently takes place after *und* in commercial language, just as is the case with the co-ordinate conjunctions dealt with in par. 100 of Grunm.

The words *hochachtungsvoll*, *hochachtend*, and *ergebens* are used for the English 'Yours truly,' 'Yours faithfully,' 'Obediently,' and frequently spelt with a capital, even if in the middle of the concluding sentence of the letter. They are then written on a separate line.

The wording of addresses in German differs from that customary in English. The place of residence is given first, followed by the street, the number of the house coming last. In foreign correspondence, however, the style used in the country in question is often adopted in preference.

# GERMAN COMMERCIAL PHRASES; *systematically arranged for reference.*

## DATING LETTERS.

Berlin, August 1st., 1875.	Berlin, den 1sten August, 18
Hamburg, 2nd June, 1890.	Hamburg, den 2ten Juni, 18
Dresden, Oct. 5, 1909.	Dresden, d. 5. Oktober, 19
Vienna, 10/11/05.	Wien, 10/11/05.

REMARKS.—Definite time is expressed in German by the Accusative Case ; and *den* is the Accusative Masculine Singular form of *der*. *An* (the) is sometimes used instead of *den* ; but this construction is rather antiquated. *Den* is generally contracted to *d*.

## ADDRESSING LETTERS.

Mr. Schmidt, 37 Hauptstrasse, Hamburg.	Herrn Schmidt, Hauptstras 37, Hamburg.
Messrs. Schmidt and Braun, 1 Königsplatz, Berlin.	Herren Schmidt und Brau Königsplatz No. 1, Berlin.

Note that the Dative is used. *Herrn Schmidt*=To Mr. Schmid  
*Herren Schmidt und Braun*=To Messrs. Schmidt and Braun.  
*An* (to) was formerly put before *Herrn* and *Herren*.

## HEADINGS OF LETTERS.

In commencing a German commercial letter, the date, and the place from which the letter is written, are generally put in the right-hand corner. (The address of course generally appears as a printed heading. Then comes the name of the person or firm addressed, beginning at the left-hand side of the page. *This is followed immediately by the first line of the letter.* Nothing is used which corresponds with the English 'Sir,' 'Dear Sir,' 'Gentlemen.'

## BEGINNING LETTERS.

*(not in reply to a letter received, or referring to a previous letter.)*

I hereby take the liberty of asking (=enquiring of) you ...	Ich erlaube mir hiermit bei Ihnen anzufragen ...
We are indebted to a business friend for your address, and ...	Wir verdanken Ihre w <sup>re</sup> Adresse einem Geschäfts- freund und ...

\**re* is an abbreviation of *werthe* or *werthe* (honoured) ; this word is only written in full if one wants to be exceptionally polite.

We hereby beg to enquire  
of you, whether...

Acting under instructions  
from Mr.—, I beg to inform  
you...

To our great regret, we are  
compelled to bring to your  
notice...

The object of this letter is  
to tell you that...

We have the honour to  
inform you that...

I have the pleasure to send  
you enclosed my new price  
list...

We regret to have to inform  
you...

Wir erlauben uns  
die ergebene Anfrage.

Im Auftrag des H  
teile ich Ihnen mit ...

Zu unserm grossen Be  
sind wir gezwungen,  
anzuzeigen, ...

Der Zweck dieses  
ist, Ihnen anzuzeigen,

Wir beehren uns I  
Ihnen mitzuteilen, da

Ich mache mir das V  
gen, Ihnen eingesch  
meine neue Preislis  
übersenden.

Wir bedauern, Sie h  
richtigen zu müssen ...

### BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

(in reply to a letter received.)

In reply to your favour of  
yesterday...

Replying to your favour of  
the 1st inst.

We beg to acknowledge the  
receipt of your favour of the  
day before yesterday, and...

I have duly taken note of  
the contents of your favour  
of the 3rd inst. and...

In Antwort auf Ihr W  
von gestern...

In höflicher Beantwo  
Ihres Geehrten vom 1.  
(=dieses Monats).

Wir bekennen uns  
Empfang Ihres Geehrten  
vorgestern, und...

Ich habe von dem I  
Ihres Werten vom 3.  
beste Vormerkung genom  
und ...

\* *Wertes* (favour) stands for *wertes Schreiben* (writing). Instead  
*Wertes* (esteemed), *Geehrtes* (honoured) is frequently, and *Geschätz-*  
(treasured) sometimes, used. The last is rather effusive.

## GERMAN COMMERCIAL PHRASES.

I duly received your favour of the 31st ult.

We thank you very much for your favour of the 15th inst.

Your favour of yesterday crossed ours of the same date.

The contents of your favour of the 15th inst. surprised us very much.

Ich habe Ihr Geehrtes vom 31. l.M. (=letzten Monats) richtig erhalten.

Wir danken Ihnen beste für Ihr Wertes vom 15. d.l. (=dieses Monats).

Ihr Wertes von gestern kreuzte sich mit unserm Ergebnisse† vom gleichen Datum.

Der Inhalt Ihres Wertes vom 15. d. Mts. hat uns sehr überrascht.

†*Unser Ergebenes* (devoted) is an ancient flattering term, but constantly used in referring to one's own letters.

## BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

(referring to previous correspondence.)

Referring to my letter of this morning, I...

We regret to have been without any communication from you since your favour of Aug. 12th of last year.

I consider you to be in possession of my letter of Monday last, and am still awaiting an answer thereto.

We confirm our letter of the 1st inst., and as we are still without your reply...

In continuation of my letter of the day before yesterday, I beg to inform you that...

Ich beziehe mich auf mein Ergebenes von heute Morgen und...

Wir bedauern, seit Ihrem Geehrten vom 12. Aug. v. (=vorigen Jahres) ohne Ihr w. (=werten) Nachricht geblieben zu sein.

Ich schätze Sie im Besitze meines Ergebenen vom letzten Montag, worauf ich Ihre Antwort noch erwarte.

Wir bestätigen unser Schreiben vom 1. d.M., und da wir immer noch ohne Ihre Antwort sind, so...

Unter Bestätigung meines Ergebenen von vorgestern teile ich Ihnen mit, dass...

## BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

*(in reply to an advertisement.)*

With reference to your advertisement in the 'Frankfurter Zeitung' of the 5th inst., I beg you kindly to let me have particulars.

Referring to your advertisement in the 'Cologne Gazette' of to-day's date, I take the liberty of respectfully offering you my services.

With reference to your advertisement in yesterday's 'Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,' for a sole agent in Germany, I take the liberty of applying for this position.

Referring to your advertisement in the 'Hamburger Nachrichten' of the 20th inst., I beg to send you enclosed my testimonials, from which you will see...

Will you kindly give me further information respecting your advertisement in the 'Berliner Tageblatt,' as I should probably not be indisposed to take the thing in hand

A friend has sent me your advertisement, and therefore..

Unter höfl.<sup>1</sup> Bezugnahme auf Ihre Anzeige in "Frankfurter Zeitung" 5. ct.,<sup>2</sup> bitte ich Sie mir Näheres mitzuteilen.

Höflich bezugnehmend Ihre Annonce<sup>3</sup> in der "nischen Zeitung" vom 1. tigen Tage, erlaube ich Ihnen meine Dienste ebenst anzubieten.

Mit Bezugnahme auf gestriges Inserat<sup>3</sup> in "Norddeutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung" für einen General-Agenten in Deutschland gestatte ich mir, mich diesen Posten zu bewerben

In Folge Ihrer w. Anzeige in den "Hamburger Nachrichten" unterm 20. ds. M beehre ich mich, Ihnen meine Zeugnisse einzusenden woraus Sie ersehen werden

Wollen Sie so gut sein, weitere Auskunft über Ihre Anzeige im "Berliner Tageblatt" zu geben, da ich nicht abgeneigt wäre, Sache in die Hand zu nehmen

Ein Freund hat mir Ihre Anzeige zugesandt, und daher

1. =höflich(er); 2. =currentis; 3. =Annonce, Inserat are different words for *Anzeige*; 4. abbreviation of *eventuell*; this is a constantly used word in German, and means 'provided that everything else is suitable,'



GERMAN COMMERCIAL PHRASES.

BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

*(acknowledging receipt of a letter or letters.)*

I am in receipt of your favour of the 9th inst., and in reply beg to inform you ...

Ich bekenne receipt Ihres Werter Mts., und teile Ihnen die Erwiderung mit.

In reply to your favour of yesterday, I beg to thank you for ...

In höflich. Beantwortung geehrten Gestrige Ihnen für ...

We received in due course your favour of the 15th ult., and have taken careful note of its contents.

Wir haben Ihr G. 15. l. Mts. s. Z. richtig und von dessen Inhalt eine Vormerkung gemacht.

Kindly excuse the delay in replying to your favour of the 30th of last month.

Entschuldigen Sie bitte die Verzögerung in der Beantwortung Ihres vom 30. v. Mts.

s. Z. = seiner Zeit ; v. = vorig (en), last, previous

BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

*(acknowledging receipt of order.)*

Your favour of the 15th inst. brought us a new order for ..., for which we thank you.

Ihr Geehrtes von heute brachte uns eine neue Bestellung auf ..., wofür wir danken.

We shall send you at the end of this week the goods ordered of us in your favour of yesterday.

Die uns mit Ihrer Bestellung gef. bestellten Waren werden wir Ende dieser Woche an Sie absenden.

We thank you for the order sent us in your favour of the day before yesterday, but we regret that we cannot execute it, as ...

Wir danken Ihnen für Ihre Bestellung vom vorgestern, aber wir können leider nicht ausführen.

Before despatching the articles ordered of us in your favour of the 20th inst., we beg to inform you ...

Ehe wir die uns von Ihnen bestellten Sachen an den Tag des 20. d. Mts. versenden, teilen wir Ihnen mit.

We are in receipt of your favour of yesterday, and thank you for the order given therein, which shall receive our prompt attention.

Wir empfangen Ihren von gestern und Ihnen für den uns beehrenden Auftrag, denselben schnellstens auszuführen.

We regret that we are unable to forward you the goods ordered of us in your favour of the day before yesterday, as...

Wir bedauern, die Ihnen Gelehrten von gestern bestellten Waren absenden zu können.

I thank you for the order given to my representative, but the price offered by you is so low that I cannot agree to it.

Ich danke Ihnen für Ihren Vertreter erteilte Bestellung, doch ist der von Ihnen offerierte Preis so niedrig, dass ich nicht darauf eingehen kann.

### BEGINNING OF LETTERS.

(*sending invoice for goods ordered.*)

I beg to enclose herewith the invoice for the goods ordered of our traveller, Mr. Schmidt.

Ich beehre mich, Ihnen mit Factura über den Reisenden, Herrn Schmidt, erteilten Auftrag bei

Enclosed I beg to hand you invoice of the goods ordered of us in your favour of the 15th inst., the amount of which kindly place to my credit.

Ich überreiche Ihnen gegen Rechnung über Ihren Werten vom 15. d. inst. bestellten Sache Betrag. Sie mir geschreiben wollen.

Enclosed please find invoice for the goods despatched to you by rail this day; we beg you kindly to credit us with the amount.

Eingeschlossen an Factura über die per Bahn an Sie versandten Waren, und wir bitten Sie, uns den Betrag von dem zu kreditieren.

We beg to inform you that we have this day shipped to you per steamer ... the casks of ... for which you favoured us with an order. We enclose invoice and bill of lading, and trust you will receive the goods safely.

We send you herewith the invoice for the goods ordered of us in your favour of the 25th ult. They are ready for despatch, and we await the favour of your instructions concerning them.

Enclosed we have the pleasure to hand you the desired invoice, and we shall ship the goods according to your instructions, immediately on receipt of your remittance.

Wir erlauben uns, Ihnen anzuzeigen, dass wir heute per Dampfer ... die uns freundlichst bestellten Fässer ... an Sie verschifften. Wir legen Ihnen Rechnung und Konnossement bei und wünschen Ihnen guten Empfang.

Wir übersenden Ihnen hiermit Rechnung über die mit Ihrem Werten vom 25. v. M.\* bestellten Waren. Dieselben sind zum Versand bereit, und wir erwarten Ihre gefl. Dispositionen darüber.

Eingeschlossen haben wir die Ehre, Ihnen die gewünschte Rechnung zu überreichen, und werden wir die Sachen sofort nach erhaltenen Anschaffung, Ihren Instruktionen gemäss, zur Verladung bringen.

\*v. M.=vorigen Monats, *of the last month.*

### BEGINNING OF LETTERS (*ordering goods.*)

Please send us by return per fast train the undermentioned goods.

Kindly ship the following goods to us per next steamer.

We hereby request you to send us by goods train ..., as had on Aug. 8th.

Bitte, senden Sie uns umgehend per Bahn als Eilgut die nachstehend verzeichneten Waren.

Wollen Sie gefl. per nächsten Dampfer die folgenden Waren an uns verladen.

Mit Heutigem ersuchen wir Sie, uns ..., wie am 8 Aug. gehabt, als Frachtgut zuzusenden.